Message Text

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DRAFTED BY L/ARA:FARMSTRONG:5/5/78 APPROVED BY L/ARA;FARMSTRONG ARA/PAN - D. WAGNER EB/IFD/OIA - D. GRANT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PN, EINV, BDIS

SUBJECT: BOSTON PANAMA CASE

REFS: (A) PANAMA 2849, (B) STATE 74566

- 1. DEPARTMENT HAS CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL (A) TO BOSTON PANAMA ATTORNEY JACK HELLER, SUGGESTING THAT HE CONTACT THE GOP DIRECTLY ABOUT SETTING ADATE FOR MEETING WITH THE COMMISSION. HELLER AGREED TO DO SO BUT ALSO REITERATED HIS CONCERN THAT THE GOP WAS STALLING. HE ASKED THAT WE COMPLETE OUR REVIEW OF THE LEGAL MERITS OF BOSTON PANAMA'S CASE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
- 2. DEPARTMENT HAS ALSO SPOKEN WITH RICARDO BILONICK, LEGAL COUNSELOR AT THE PANAMANIAN EMBASSY, AND ASKED FOR HIS ASSISTANCE IN SCHEDULING AN EARLY MEETING FOR HELLER IN PANAMA. WE TOLD BOTH HELLER AND BILONICK THAT WE EXPECTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A MEETING COULD BE ARRANGED SOON IN VIEW OF THE BASIC AGREEMENT REACHED THIS WEEK ON THE INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION -- APPARENTLY THE MOST PRESSING ITEM OF BUSINESS ON EDUCATION MINISTER ROYO'S CALENDAR. THE DEPARTMENT REQUESTS THAT THE EMBASSY ENCOURAGE ROYO AND THE OTHERS TO OFFER TO MEET WITH HELLER WITHIN THENEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS.

3. WHILE THE DEPARTMENT WILL NOT RENDER A JUDGMENT ON THE MERITS OF BOSTON PANAMA'S CASE SO LONG AS DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE COMPANY AND THE GOP CAN CONTINUE AND HAVE SOME PROSPECT OF PROGRESS, WE MUST BE IN A POSITION TO DO SO SHOULD THEY BREAK DOWN. THUS WE STILL NEED URGENTLY THE INFORMATION OUTLINED IN REFTEL (B), TO WHICH THE EMBASSY HAS NOT RESPONDED. IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE GOP ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF THIS CASE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT A REPORT IS BEING PREPARED FOR OUR USE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BOSTON PANAMA COMMISSION. CAN EMBASSY INFORM US WHEN WE MAY EXPECT TO RECEIVE THAT REPORT? CHRISTOPHER

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